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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 270.

JANUARY, 1930.

TRUTH — LIBERTY — RELIGION.

“ Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ? ”

—I Cor. 3 : 16.

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Editorial.

Women in the Pulpit.

Though many of the Presbyteries in Ulster have declared definitely against women in the pulpit the question is by no means settled. There is evidence to show that this will be a burning question for some time to come. Prominent ministers and laymen in the Presbyterian Church have declared definitely in favour of women ministers of religion, at least in private and semi-private conversation. Whether they will state their views openly in public however, is a matter for conjecture. In the Established Church also there seems to be a growing body of opinion in favour of women taking a more active part in church leadership.

Needless to say, on this question as on many others, prejudice is allowed to cloud the issue. There are still people whose religious outlook is based on the supposition that God's Revelation and the power to give it adequate verbal expression, has been confined to the male sex. Meanwhile our own Church might take the opportunity afforded by the controversy, to definitely declare its attitude. Judging by the communications received by the editor there seems to be a feeling that the Non-Subscribing Church should make a move in this matter. Elsewhere in this issue will be found a letter from one of our prominent women lay workers embodying a very practical suggestion. Here for the time being we leave the matter, but would urge the desirability of making a move at once.

The Moderator's Message.

The Moderator has very kindly penned a New Year's message to our own household of faith, and it is a message that we badly need. The next few years will prove to be a very critical time in the history of our Church. We have to face the unwelcome fact that not only are our numbers gradually decreasing but Church interest among the depleted congregations seems to be on the wane. We say " seems to be " deliberately, because we feel that actually, the zeal for our Liberal Religious Faith is still as strong and vital as ever it was, although the outward manifestations are not so encouraging as they were a generation ago. Perhaps some strong opposition to our views and a little persecution would provide the necessary incentive to rally round the banner of religious toleration which the Non-Subscribing Church has held aloft in Ireland for so long and with such credit.

The Moderator goes right to the heart of the matter when he says that " The sense of fellowship is one of the most vital needs of our Church to-day." May we have the foresight and wisdom to foster and develop this necessary sense of fellowship so that the year 1930 may witness one of the turning points in our history.

Christ or War ?

We commend to our readers the careful study of the article " Christ or War," by the Rev. J. H. Ewbank, B.A., B.D., appearing on another page. It is a clear, well-reasoned and forcible contribution to an extremely thorny problem. Mr. Ewbank not only has very definite views on this subject but he expresses them in an extremely interesting and convincing manner.

In spite of all the peace talk, national and international, there is very little evidence of a change of heart among the majority of those in high places and until this change takes place we shall always have the grim spectre of war hovering over our heads. We should never lose sight of the fact that the most savage and barbarous war in the world's history was waged by Christian nations professing to follow the Prince of Peace. Need we wonder that some of the Eastern races look with suspicion on Christianity and those who profess it?

Mr. Ewbank has chosen a very appropriate title for his article. The subject bristles with difficulties but out of the conflicting views there emerges this clear-cut issue. If we are to be actual Christians instead of nominal Christians, doers of the Word and not hearers only, we must choose between Christ and War. We cannot have both.

Dean Inge and Conversion.

It would seem that the main point at issue between Dean Inge and his opponents on the question of conversion is this, that whereas the Dean questions the validity of any alleged conversion that is not gradual and not the result of a long process of development, his critics maintain that the validity of conversion depends not on the exact type, whether gradual or sudden, conscious or unconscious, because it is

possible that every type of conversion known may be equally valid and genuine. The Dean certainly has the comparatively new science of Psychology on his side. Psychology holds that no conversion is sudden though the *consciousness of the conversion* is sometimes sudden. Perhaps both the Dean and his critics could meet on this common ground. What was formerly thought to be sudden conversion is now considered to be the culminating point of a long process, the bursting into consciousness of something that has been smouldering for a long time in the unconscious, the firing of a slowly-laid train, the bursting of a silently-maturing flower-bud, the transformation scene in the life-long drama of the soul.

However when all is said and done the test of any conversion, whether gradual or apparently sudden, is the result in conduct. Like everything else, conversion is known by its fruits. Spurgeon tells the story of a servant who always disregarded instructions to sweep under the mat and who eventually became converted and asked for admission to the church. "How do you know you have been converted," asked Spurgeon? "Because Sir," answered the girl, "I now always sweep under the mat."

Here is the essence of the matter. It applies to kings and queens as well as to servants, to popes and bishops, as well as to street-sweepers.

THE EDITOR WISHES ALL READERS A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

What the Angels will Ask.

When God made the Earth it shook to and fro till He put mountains on it to keep it firm. Then the Angels asked, O God is there anything in Thy creation stronger than these mountains?

And God replied, "Iron is stronger than the mountains, for it breaks them."

And is there anything in Thy creation stronger than iron?

"Yes, fire is stronger than iron, for it melts it."

Is there anything stronger than fire?

"Yes, water, for it quenches it."

Is there anything stronger than water?

"Yes, wind, for it puts water in motion."

Our Sustainer, is there anything stronger than wind?

"Yes, a good man giving alms." If he give it with his right hand and conceal it from his left he overcomes all things.

Every good act is charity. Your smiling in your brother's face, your putting a wanderer in the right road, your giving water to the thirsty, is charity. A man's true wealth hereafter is the good he has done to his fellow-men. When he dies people will ask, What good deeds has he sent before him?—A SERMON ASCRIBED TO MAHOMET.

New Year, 1930.

THE REV. J. GLYNNE DAVIES,

Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Church of Ireland.

We have reached another milestone on life's road. We are reminded afresh that life is a journey, a progress—that, as far as time is concerned, there is no standing still.

New Year's Day brings with it many messages—messages of warning, guidance and encouragement. It tells us to reflect upon the year that is past—to note its failures and its triumphs—its joys and its sorrows. It bids us seek the meaning of each experience and to apply the new knowledge to the new tasks and duties of the period before us. Happy are we, if in the course of 1929 we were not overtaken by sorrow and loss. None of us, I imagine, have escaped trials of some sort, and all of us, I hope, experienced some true joys.

We know that from many a home within our fellowship, the Angel of Death bore gently away friends and loved ones, whose departure has left a blank that cannot be filled. During the year we have lost some of the most loyal and generous members of our Church. We would extend to their friends and relatives who mourn their passing our sincere sympathy. Their removal from among us is a sacred call to us to a renewed zeal and devotion in the service of the Church and faith to which they gave so generously and wholeheartedly of their best. Let us regard ourselves as one with them still in a fellowship which can not be broken even in death.

The sense of fellowship is one of the most vital needs of our Church to-day. Situated as many of our Churches are, at long distances from each other, we tend to lose that sense of unity and sympathy which is essential to the progress of a religious fellowship. The Women's League and the Laymen's League have done much to bring our members closer together—but much more needs to be done if we are to attain a full sense of unity and purpose. This applies more especially to our young people. Our young men and women leave home and settle in a distant town, where there may or may not be a Church of our faith, and very often they are lost to us.

We have no definite system by which we may keep constant touch with them—whereby they may be made to feel that they

are still of our fellowship and that we follow them in their new ventures with an abiding interest and solicitude.

A letter of introduction from the mother church to the nearest of our congregations in such cases would assist greatly in keeping our young people inside the fold, and make them feel, that however distant their lines may be cast, that their mother church is still their spiritual home, and their fathers' faith their faith.

Would that we could kindle this spirit of fellowship and unity in the hearts of our people, particularly of our young people. Then, I feel sure that within a short period we should be able to record real growth and progress in our church life.

The labours and loyalty of our forefathers are bearing fruit abundantly in the Christian thought of our day. They were leaders of religious thought in the land—lovers of truth, justice, freedom and purity. It is a high and noble task to enter into their labours. In unity of spirit and purpose is our strength. May the Year of Grace 1930 bring us a fuller realisation of them, that the faith that is dear to us may flourish in our keeping and we become truer servants of Jesus.

For the New Year.

Lord of all new life,
We pray thee for this new year,
That in it we may be renewed in Thine own life,
And walk through it in Thine own companionship.

We pray Thee for new freedom of spirit,
New zeal in Thy service, new forgetfulness of
ourselves,
New power to forsake the lower path,
And to climb ever upward to the heights.

We pray Thee for a new breaking down of barriers
this year,
Between man and man, race and race, nation and
nation.

We pray Thee for a new thinning of the obscurity
Which hides Thee from the dim eyes of men.

O Father, in this new year
Lift us out of this stagnant morass of delusion,
Where we are choked in the muddy depths,
Content with an existence which is one long death.

Lift us out and away into the clear glory of Thy
presence
Where the darkness is cleansed from our eyes,
Our form is changed, and—whilst still dwelling in
the flesh

We meet Thee, day by day, face to face, in Eternity.
AMEN.

AN INDIAN COLLEGE PRAYER.

Christ or War

By REV. J. H. EWBANK, B.A., B.D.

1.—The Cost of War.

The institution of war is one of the most urgent and pressing problems before the minds of men and women. This is so for many reasons. War means killing men, and that is no small concern. According to official figures ten million soldiers were killed in the last war. Twenty million soldiers were injured, many of them for life. The killing has involved the families of men in much sorrow and deprivation. There were five million war widows and nine million orphans. These facts are of great importance as showing the human cost of war, and we should not try to lessen their significance in any way.

In the economic sphere war means all kinds of difficulty and suffering. The devastation, the poverty, the widespread unemployment, the question of prisoners and refugees, the starving children and homeless multitudes, all make up a terrible indictment against this gigantic folly.

After a war is ended, there is left behind a harvest of bitterness and hatred. The ties of friendship have been severed, and to get any kind of co-operation among nations after a war is a task of immense difficulty.

Add to these facts the burden which the constant preparation for war imposes upon nations. In Britain it is said that thirteen shillings of every pound goes to pay for past wars, and in preparation for future wars. The national budgets are weighed down with war charges; social services are starved; taxation weighs heavily upon industry.

Another reason that makes the war question urgent is the destructive character of modern warfare. The resources and ingenuities of science, mechanical, chemical and even bacteriological are harnessed to the war chariot.

Mr. Winston Churchill in a book entitled "The World Crisis" tells us:—

"When all was over Torture and Cannibalism were the only two expedients that the civilised, scientific Christian states had been able to deny themselves, and these were of doubtful utility."

Major General Swinton says:—"The final form of human strife is germ warfare. I think it will come to that."

However, it is not in these facts that we reach the deepest evil of war. The most terrible thing about war is that it soaks the soul of a nation in falsehood and hatred. Apart from the losses in men, money and material, which were colossal, there is the moral loss suffered by the injection of the poison of hatred into the hearts of people. It has been said rightly that truth is the first casualty in war. We remember the ghastly atrocity stories. It was these stories of German cruelty, which stirred the souls of many youths in Britain. Similar stories were current in all countries, and most of them were deliberately forged. Without falsehood and hatred no great war could be sustained. It is thus the nature of war not only to kill the bodies of men, but also to demoralise all that is noble in the soul.

Now if war is thus the supreme problem for the citizen it is still much more urgent for the Christian. When we think of the terrible destructiveness of war, physical moral and spiritual, we should ask ourselves what right have we to support it? When we realise that war is a denial of the moral law of Christ, that it is fatal to all fine spiritual life, that it engenders enmity, strife and hatred, that it is utterly opposed to the spirit of Christ, that it stirs up the instincts of the jungle—when we realise these things, we become conscious of a flagrant opposition between Christ and War.

2.—Moral Equivalent for War.

It has often been demonstrated that war does not pay, that victor and vanquished are both losers, and some people hope for a cessation of war on that plea. Mr. Norman Angell in "The Great Illusion," showed clearly that war is not a paying concern. But to the credit of human nature it has to be said, that war will never be abandoned because of financial considerations. The impulses which make for war are psychological. Let patriotism be evoked, let passions be aroused, and all financial calculations are swept aside, and men and women will venture all for something they hold dear and sacred. In the way of rational argument, of convincing men that war means gigantic loss, we must do all we can. In the way of establishing the machinery and institutions of peace we are obliged to do all we can. But let us never forget that the

passions which make for war are in the hearts of men. A change of heart, of outlook is needed.

William James spoke of a moral equivalent for war. Instead of the war passion of envy, hatred and fear, there must be the fruits of peace—love, joy, peace, goodwill—in the souls of men. Where but in Christianity can be found this moral equivalent for war? Mightier than rifles and machine guns, more irresistible than poison gas, has been the spirit of Christ to reconcile men and nations. And if we look back over the Christian era, history shows how Christianity has reconciled man to God, man to man, nation to nation, while the method of war has alienated mankind and issued in disaster.

3.—The Way of Christ.

The Christian objection to war rests on the ethics and principles taught by Christ, and illustrated in His life. In ascertaining the ethics and principles of Christ, I set aside the time worn method of settling the issue by citing a text, and that other method of trying to imagine what Christ would have done if He had lived in the twentieth century. We must seek the authority of Christ elsewhere.

In the New Testament we find the authority of Christ. What briefly is the main note of the life and teaching of Christ? It may be summed up in one word—Love. By turning from the teaching to the life of Christ we see what is meant by Love. In Christ, Love is a consuming passion, which sought to win men from evil to good, from self to God, to overcome the evil in men and bring them into fellowship with God. In the New Testament this is called Redemption. The greatness of that love is seen in the story of Christ's life. Towards the end of His life, He was faced with the triumph of his enemies, the victory of evil, the wreck of His hopes, His own imminent crucifixion, the possible crucifixion of His disciples, and the disappearance of the religion He had founded. In that crisis the alternatives were, either to resist evil with evil, or simply to stand firm to the principles He had advocated. And the vision of Christ upon the Cross, praying for the very men who had nailed Him there has been a far greater power to move the hearts of men and win them to God, than if He had met force with force. Christ definitely refused to return evil for evil. He forbade His disciples to use force. He put aside

vengeance and retaliation. He gave love for hate, good for evil. This was the new way of life as taught by Christ and illustrated in His own life.

Additional witness is given to the new way of life as found in Christ, if we glance at the conditions which prevailed in the Graeco-Roman world of the time. Palestine was a conquered province of the Roman Empire. Fortifications and garrisons of Roman soldiers were found throughout the land. Amongst the Jews there was an intense hatred and a constant chafing against bondage. Riots and rebellions were frequent. There was one problem for the Jews—the problem of escape. Their hope was centred upon Messiah, the anointed King. To the minds of the Jews, the Messiah would wage war, and bring victory and prosperity to the nation. Jesus was familiar with all this and set aside the proposal. The chief reason, no doubt, was that He saw the futility of armed force to achieve His mission, and found in it a fundamental contradiction of the way of life He had chosen.

In the gospels we find the authority of Christ. Nothing is more insistently demanded than obedience to the great imperatives of Christian Ethics—Love, Righteousness, Self-Sacrifice, Good-will. These belong to what is most essential in the Christian view of life. These principles demand not only intellectual assent but also moral decision. Are we for Christ or are we against Him? Are we for His way of life or against it? Obligation is laid upon all Christians to conform to the high standard of life, which Christ by His example and teaching established. In the binding of this standard upon the individual conscience lies the authority of Christ.

4.—Opposition of Christianity and War.

The Christian following the way of Christ seeks to overcome evil with good. Can it be said that the methods of modern warfare—machine guns, long range artillery, poison gas, air raids, submarines, starvation by blockades, propaganda by hate and falsehood—can it be said that these are the ways by which the Kingdom of God is to be established? Can we by such means love the enemy? Do we turn sinners into saints by such means? It is because war is ineffective to achieve these objects, and is a violation of the way of Christ, that an increasing multitude of people are opposed

to the methods of war, even though the purpose of war may be high and lofty.

The purpose of war may be good ; it appeared so in 1914, when multitudes went forth from the highest motives. Many Christians were swept off their feet, and even borrowed arguments from Christianity for the war. Others said Christianity applied only to individuals, and had no application to nations. Some took up another attitude and said :—" For the present Christianity is on the shelf." That was a clear acknowledgment that Christianity and war were irreconcilable. The way of war is destructive ; the way of Christ is constructive. War tries to overcome evil with evil ; the way of Christ is to overcome evil with Good. War aims at the destruction of life, Christ aims at saving life. If Christianity is to be qualified or set aside in favour of war, it is not a supreme need but only a second best. The question the Christian should ask himself is this : Must he bear loyal witness to the authority of Christ, or are there times when he can set aside that loyalty, when he can indulge in a lapse ? Is that lapse good for Christianity and is it good for the Christian ? If we believe that the way of Christ is God's way for the world, then it is only by utter loyalty to that way wherever it may lead that we can fulfil the purpose of God. War is a violation of the spirit of Christ and is ineffective to achieve the Kingdom of God.

Random Notes.

By " QUIET OBSERVER."

The Centenary of the First Meeting of Remonstrant Synod occurs on the 25th, 26th and 27th May next. Here is an opportunity for the Laymen's League to hold another of their big Ulster Hall meetings, as the 25th falls on a Sunday. Why not make it a two-night affair by holding a social in the Central Hall on 26th ?

The date is several months away, but preparations can be made none too soon.

Country congregations, such as Kil-linchy, Banbridge, Templepatrick or Crumlin could be enthused and encouraged if visits of prominent ministers in our denomination could be arranged for the evenings of 26th and 27th.

At the first meeting of the Synod, Dr. Montgomery preached eloquently on " Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts," a text that might again be used.

Few of us to-day would accept wholeheartedly the resolution passed at that first meeting, " That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the only infallible rule of faith and duty and contain all knowledge necessary to salvation."

Two hundred years ago, Rev. John Abernethy of Antrim, accepted a call to Dublin. This was a decided loss to Belfast where he had started " The Belfast Society." Its members were leading preachers and very eloquent. For many years they confined their activities to the pulpit. But in 1720, Mr. Abernethy printed a sermon, " Religious obedience founded on Personal Persuasion," in which he held forth that the sole rule of a man's conduct was his persuasion of what was true and right. This was replied to by Rev. John Malcome, of Dunmurry, who termed it " New Light," a term applied afterwards to all Non-Subscribers.

It is acknowledged now by a great many Presbyterians that Dr. Cooke made a serious mistake in forcing the ministers who formed the Remonstrant Synod out of the General Synod. The Synod at Cookstown in passing his overtures regarding students for the ministry has tied the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to doctrines which are now considered unworthy of any Christian Church. There was just as much New Light principles held amongst members of the Church of Scotland, but Dr. Chalmers and others did not advocate exclusion, and thus avoided a serious rupture at that time.

Dr. Cooke's services to his church have been recognised by various means. His statue opposite the Royal Academical Institution to which school he was a decided opponent is a Belfast landmark. The Centenary Church on Ormeau Road and other minor memorials testify to the esteem in which he was held. But one looks in vain for an outstanding memorial to his great opponent, Dr. Henry Montgomery, the champion of Non-Subscription ; surely the Church for which he fought so nobly will take the opportunity offered in 1930, to make fitting recognition of his services by erecting some tangible memorial to him.

The Latest Religion, American Humanism.

The "New adventure in religion" as Humanism is called by one of its leaders (Dr. Potter a prominent New York preacher) differs radically from all other faiths in so far as it acknowledges no God. There is no evidence of God's existence; He is simply an invention of the human mind and the sooner the human mind frees itself from this fallacy the sooner will it apply itself to practical problems concerning the human family. The only Supreme Being worthy of worship and service is Humanity, past, present and future.

There is nothing in the divine which is superior or external to mankind. Infinite mercy, justice, love, goodness and other qualities we usually associate with God are really attributes of the human mind, attributes which have taken root and grown in the human mind and then transferred to an external mythical God who has been invented for the purpose of embodying these attributes. Such in brief are the fundamental beliefs of the latest American Faith, called Humanism.

Revival of an Old Belief.

The first thing one might say about this new faith is that there is nothing new about it. Under different names it has been known for centuries. In its most definite and concrete form it appears in the first half of the nineteenth century under the name of Positivism, a name coined by the French philosopher Comte to denote his system of religion which excluded all powers external to humanity and dealt only with those definitely ascertainable or "positive" facts which the study of humanity revealed. Present-day American Humanism is nothing more or less than the resurrected French Positivism, or the Religion of Humanity.

While one cannot help admiring the Humanist's honesty and sincerity in attempting to found a faith on definite, ascertainable facts, his courage in sweeping away a whole collection of worn-out dogmas, superstitions and magical beliefs connected with present-day religion, and substituting the noble principles and high ideals of the human mind, and his devotion to the cause of humanity which he feels to be the only cause worthy of his worship and service, one cannot help wondering if he has not gone much farther than even the facts of rationalism warrant.

An Irrational Faith.

One cannot help wondering whether this so-called new faith (actually an old faith under a new name) is as rational as it professes to be, whether it has not swept away something very valuable in its clean-sweep of everything connected with present-day religion, whether its very zeal for the service of humanity has not blinded it to another cause which claims service?

For instance in its attempt to be logically rational and to deal only with ascertained facts, it sweeps away the first article of all religious faith namely, "in the beginning God created the world and man," and substitutes "the world and man have evolved," but this, though scientifically correct, takes us no nearer to the heart of the question of creation than the Genesis account takes us.

Evolution is merely a process and not an explanation and the statement that the world and man have evolved still leaves us with the pertinent questions, of How, Why, When and Where?

This universe and all in it, including the whole human family, came into being either by chance and accident or through the instrumentality of some power. It is either a meaningless whirl which somehow or other managed to make itself or it is an ordered whole which bears signs of a Creator's handiwork.

If it is the first, then Humanism is the only sane, rational faith because humanity is certainly the finest thing that has come out of this chance collection of matter and motion, and as such is worthy of man's adoration, worship and service.

Evidence of the Universe.

However, if it is the second, if the universe bears unmistakable signs of intelligent creation, evidence of a power higher than that of human beings, then to ignore such evidence is not only a betrayal of human reason but a violation of all those higher qualities of appreciation and discernment which distinguish man from the beasts of the field and jungle.

When put in this manner the issue becomes perfectly clear and one is forced to ask whether the Humanist is correct in refusing to acknowledge a power higher than the whole of humanity, past, present and future, or whether the Christian is correct in acknowledging a power that is as high above humanity as the heavens are higher than the earth.

Man did not make himself, even a humanist would not assert this; therefore he is rationally bound to look to, and acknowledge, and worship, some power beyond himself.

This power is called God and a humanist who denies its existence is surely less rational than a Christian who affirms it. Consequently Humanism stands condemned by the very same evidence it calls to its support, namely rationalism. S. P. W.

Subsidy Fund.

The Treasurer begs to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of £1 from All Souls' Church, Belfast, per Miss Montgomery, being annual donation to the funds of the Magazine.

Laymen's League.

A Complimentary Dinner to the ministers of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland will be given by the Belfast Chapter in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, Belfast, on Friday, January 17th, 1930, at 7-30 o'clock. Tickets, 4/6 each, can be had from members of the League or at 35 Rosemary Street.

Hints for Worshippers.

(FROM AN OLD NUMBER OF "THE SEED SOWER.")

- 1.—Be in time.
- 2.—If late, don't enter during reading or prayer.
- 3.—Join in the singing, including the responses and the amens; and if you are modest enough to say that God has not given you the power to sing, then try to make a joyful noise.
- 4.—Kneel at prayer. Do not merely sit, and don't lounge.
- 5.—Try to keep your thoughts fixed on the service.
- 6.—Don't look round when the door opens to see who is coming in.
- 7.—Do not talk or whisper to your neighbour, especially at the opening of service.
- 8.—If the sermon is dull and you **cannot** listen, sit quietly, and think of your faults, and preach yourself a sermon.

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Fees, 130 Guineas.

For Particulars and Prospectus, apply to the Head Mistress.

Letters to the Editor.

[Letters to the Editor are welcomed. They should be written in good taste, as brief as possible and duly authenticated. No letter will be inserted without the writer's name].

Ballyhemlin,

5th December, 1929.

SIR,

In the article "Church and Theology," in December issue, it is asserted that "Irish Protestantism has no names in theological or devotional literature." The Primate of all Ireland, Dr. D'Arcy stands pre-eminent as a theologian of European reputation, and as such is honoured by the whole Anglican community.

Yours, etc., JOHN BARRON.

Moneyrea Manse,

Comber, Co. Down.

17th December, 1929.

SIR,

Be it known to all Unitarians of the North of Ireland who intend to emigrate to Toronto, Ontario, that there is a Unitarian Church at 216 Jarvis Street. Most of our people who go to Canada, do not know that we have churches there and the result is plain, they either drift or join other religious communities. The Toronto Unitarians have been alert enough to "save" some of our people from being "lost," but they complain that they are not communicated with and in consequence they are missing many.

They want us on this side to understand that they are only too glad to meet and welcome every Unitarian who comes either to settle in the city or neighbourhood or who passes through, and they will look after his or her comfort, find suitable lodgings and a job, if required.

Communications should be sent to the Secretary, Mr. C. W. Cruickshank, 32 Roslin Avenue, Toronto 12, Ontario.

Yours, etc., J. DARE DAVIES.

Myrtle Bank,

Ravenhill Road,

Belfast.

23rd December, 1929.

SIR,

In view of the surprising publicity given to the sermons on "Women in the Pulpit" it would be very enterprising, if the Women's

League in co-operation with the ministers and committees of the four city churches of our denomination would invite four ordained women to take the services on the same Sunday. There are seven ordained women to choose from, viz.:—Barbara Thomas, Cheltenham; Margaret Barr, Rotherham; M. C. Harris, Aberdare; Ethel Kay, Warwick; Rosalind Lee, Essex Hall, London; Grace Mewhort, Banbury; and Joyce Daplyn, Golder's Green. It would have to be done soon, while the public interest is still warm. The difficulty would be the expense, but perhaps the Synod would assist.

Yours, etc., ETHEL M. JACKSON.

The Thirties.

BY ULLIN.

With the New Year we enter on the last year of the third decade of the Twentieth Century. A hundred years ago William IV. came to the throne, and for the older ones among us, to refer to "the thirties" is to recollect important happenings which brought lasting and beneficial changes, though not without great public agitation accompanied by riots and disturbances. The Reform Bill made much needed changes in the franchise; slavery in British dominions was abolished; Whigs became Liberals and Tories, Conservatives, and a century of struggle and progressiveness has brought us to our present political and social condition.

India is more prominent, at the present time, in the minds of British people than ever before. There is strong feeling among all sections as to the policy to be adopted towards that great Dominion, with its population of three hundred millions, the majority of the British Empire. Events move rapidly and before these words have appeared in print, great and far-reaching decisions for good or ill may have been reached. Because of the link with India

N.B.—Editorial Communications should be sent to the Rev. S. P. Whitehouse, 19 Wellington Park Avenue, Belfast.

Phone—Malone 378.

Contributions must be in the Editor's hands not later than the 20th of the month.

we have in the British Commonwealth of Free Nations, every great religion in the world. Already there is established and doing a useful work a League of Religions. At present it may be somewhat academic. May we within the new decade we are approaching see a world-wide living, popular Fellowship of Faiths, binding together on the great fundamentals of religion, on the greatest of all fundamentals—Love, the Empire in a great Brotherhood? If a great flame of Love swept the Empire from side to side throughout the world following the Sun which ever shines somewhere on the British Dominions, a thousand perplexities would disappear, the suspicion and hatred which make the problems, would cease, and Love would give the guidance where laboured Reason uninspired, fails.

In "the thirties" will thirty bright spots—perhaps more—shine out on the map of Ireland flashing golden lines to each other, centres of spirituality, of brave endeavour and devotion to Truth? The ex-Archbishop of Canterbury, shortly before his retirement gave a very human, homely, encouraging address one Sunday night to the men on the light-ships and light-houses: "My brave brothers" he called them—who have been brought within reach of his voice by means of "the wireless."

There are ministers and brave congregations in solitary outposts, and largely isolated even in the midst of populations holding forth the Word of Life which is the Light of men, shining in the darkness. Only by imagining what the sea would be to mariners without the guiding lights, can we gauge the value of the services of those lonely watchers who send the gleam across the wave. God knows the value of work faithfully and patiently performed in His name and for Him. Ours is the day of small things compared outwardly with those of more popular churches; yet ours the honour to be entrusted with guarding a burning and shining light at whatsoever point duty may have placed us.

Women Preachers for France.

Miss Spiller (Chairman of the International Committee of our Women's League) has recently visited Paris to meet "L'Alliance Groupe Français des Amies du Progrès." She reports that though it was a new idea to these women that they

might conduct a service themselves, they are well organised in their social work, caring for cases of sickness or distress under the leadership of Pastor Viénot. At their special request, the League booklet "Prayers for Little Children" is being translated into French.—"Inquirer and Christian Life," 21/12/29.

All Souls' Dramatic Society, in "Outward Bound."

(Extracts from "News-Letter," Dec. 19, 1929).

All Souls' Dramatic Society, Belfast, stands high in amateur theatrical circles in Ulster, and much of their success is due to organisation, enthusiasm, and good team work. Last night the members produced Sutton Vane's "Outward Bound," and in doing so flew at higher game than has been their custom.

They knew what they were up against in tackling this play, but set themselves to the task with a cheerfulness and energy which is to be commended. They made their own "props" and scenery, and rehearsed with remarkable patience. As a result a packed audience in Rosemary Hall, Elmwood Avenue, were given an intellectual treat, as well as seeing how a good play can be acted by amateurs who know their jobs.

"Outward Bound" has been termed a lay sermon preached in a theatre, but there is nothing dry or heavy about it. It tries to put forward rational themes of life and after-life, and the author suggests that after-life is a continuation of the present one, where the responsible work on earth is taken up in the new sphere. It is a warning against the ignoring of one's responsibilities.

On board a "death ship," which plies between earth and the shores of eternity, are collected several people who are very representative of the things that are. There is, for instance, a brazen business man, two "suicides," a young wastrel, a junior curate, and others. The journey finds them talking freely of what is before them, and one gets a psychological diagnosis of the feelings and emotions of these strange passengers. What each one anticipates is cleverly revealed. The author uses them as the mouthpieces for his pet theories, and in groping after some new theory of the meaning of life and death many moral and ethical questions are

raised. Humour is used very effectively to bring out many a truth, and in every respect the play is a great contribution to the modern theatre.

The excellent cast entered very fully into the spirit of it all, and altogether gave a finished performance, which has the polish which one associates with a professional company.

Honours were evenly divided, for this is a "team play." Miss Eileen Millar was effective in the humorous role of Mrs. Midgett, while Miss Ara Montgomery put plenty of snap into her interpretation of a scheming *nouveau-riche* lady. The "suicides," Miss Flora Naden and Mr. Arthur W. Bowyer, and the wastrel youth, played by Mr. Eric A. Naden, were extremely well done. Mr. Donald Lockett gave a clever study of the young curate, and Mr. James Henderson was the business-man of a certain type to the life. Mr. Robert Frater was splendid as the ship's steward.

Already the company have been asked to give a repeat performance. This speaks for itself.

Reports.

Belfast : The First Church.—The Sale of Work organised by the Women's League under the Presidency of Mrs. Nicol Cross, for the church organ renovation fund, Belfast Domestic Mission, and certain hospitals, was successful beyond all expectations. Miss Davidson of Bryansford opened the Sale in a charming little speech, being introduced by the Minister, who was chairman on the occasion. Miss Mona Cross presented her with a bouquet on behalf of the Branch, and Miss Armstrong, the Vice-President, proposed the vote of thanks, which was seconded by Mrs. Hume, O.B.E. The aim was to clear at least £100, but as the result of an appeal for donations issued by the President, Mrs. Cross, the labours of many members and the hearty co-operation of friends, a few of them in England, the gross total realised was over £200. Every stall did excellently, the Clerk of the weather, as the chairman said, was in a heretical mood, smiling genially on the Unitarian cause, and the occasion was much enjoyed by all who served and by the goodly number who attended. Thanks are returned to all friends who helped in any way.

All Souls' Branch of Women's League.—The All Souls' members of the Women's

League wish to thank most heartily the members and friends who contributed so generously to the recent Sale of Work. As in former years the practical help in the form of donations, contributions to the stalls, and personal service was greatly valued. The result was hardly up to expectations considering the preliminary preparations but we have every reason to feel grateful for the sum of £111 10s. 0d., which has been apportioned as follows. Church Funds, £100; Poor's Purse, £5; Domestic Mission Christmas Parcels, £3; Sick Poor Nursing Society, 10/-; Destitute Sick Society, 10/-. Parcels of winter garments have also been forwarded to the two last mentioned Societies. To Miss Montgomery, on whom much of the organising work fell, we are specially indebted. We have also to thank the Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A., for the most interesting and enjoyable lecture on "Scottish Humour," which he gave in aid of our funds. The bad weather and counter attractions did their best to keep people away, but those who attended were well repaid. The amount realised was £1 11s. 3d. The work meetings of the branch will be resumed on Monday, 27th January, at 3-30 p.m.

Belfast Domestic Mission.—The Hon. Secretary wishes to thank most sincerely all the ladies who so generously responded to the request of the Needlework Guild for garments and donations for distribution among mission families at Christmas time; also thanks are due to the First Church and the All Souls' Branches of the Women's League for the splendid parcels they sent. About 30 parcels were distributed and the

The Inquirer and Christian Life.

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Boot Fund benefitted to the extent of 31/-. The Needlework Guild came into existence in 1896, being organised by the Ladies' Committee of the Mission which then had 40 members, a contrast to the present 14 members with an average attendance of 5. The original Committee met every week and considered the cases of relief submitted by the Missionary; in 1896 there were 565 such cases under consideration and it is interesting to note how the assistance was rendered, viz.: 200 cases with bread and flour, averaging about 14 lbs. each; 130 cases with money; 45 cases with groceries; 80 cases with coals, averaging about 3 bags each (this included the City coal); 10 cases with medicine, and 100 parcels of clothing. The present Committee meets once a month and has such a small membership that means had to be sought to enlarge its scope. This was done by appealing to all lady subscribers to the Mission and the results this year and last show that it was only necessary to make the need known for the subscribers to readily respond. The Hon. Secretary wishes also to thank the All Souls' Branch of the Women's League for their generous gift to the Coal Fund, and for the parcels of groceries distributed at Christmas and for their hospitality to the Mission Branch of the Women's League on Monday, December 16, when an Xmas Tea was provided for the 33 members. The following ladies assisted in the musical programme, Mesdames Hamilton, Ervine and Hay; Misses Matthews and Hay.

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Clough.—Harvest Thanksgiving services were held on Sunday, October 27th, at 12 noon and 7 p.m. The meeting house was beautifully decorated with flowers, fruit and vegetables by the ladies of the congregation. Special reference to the decorations and the "wee stack" appeared in the Belfast papers. The preacher was Rev. J. Shaw Brown, of Coseley, whose sermons were interesting and appropriate. The attendances, both morning and evening, were large. The soloists were Miss Hamilton, Belfast, and Rev. J. D. Davies. Miss M. Huddleston presided at the organ. A deputation from Clough congregation, consisting of Messrs. H. Shaw, Secretary; Samuel Robinson, Treasurer; Mrs. Hay and Mrs. Moore, paid a surprise visit to Moneyrea to present Rev. and Mrs. J. D. Davies with a handsome solid silver salver, suitably inscribed, the gift of the congregation as a token of esteem and recognition of their services in Clough. Mr.

Davies thanked the visitors on behalf of his wife and himself and referred to the innumerable kindnesses, loyalty and generosity of the congregation during his sixteen and a half years' ministry, and he felt certain that the new minister would find as warm friends in Clough, as he had found.

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Holywood.—The annual meeting of the Congregation of the First Presbyterian (Non-Subscribing) Church was held on December 15th, under the presidency of Mr. W. Patterson, who referred to the great loss their congregation and the Church generally had sustained by the death of Sir John Campbell, and also to the death of Mrs. Maginnis, who for many years had acted as Assistant Treasurer, and whose practical interest in the church would be much missed. The Committee's report, with the Treasurer's Statement of Accounts, were presented, and they were adopted on the motion of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. F. A. Robinson (Hon. Treasurer). The accounts showed a small credit balance. The Hon. Treasurer and the Hon. Secretary (Mr. James Shannon, jun.), were re-elected, and the following were added to the Committee, in place of four retiring members:—Dr. Greenfield; Messrs. H. Shannon, sen., T. Edens Osborne and W. J. Harvey. Mr. F. A. Robinson was re-appointed the congregation's representative on the Board of Governors of the Upper Sullivan School. Votes of thanks were accorded to the members of the choir and the Chairman.

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Mountpottinger : Belfast.—A Sale of Work and Cake Fair was held on the 13th December. The opening ceremony was gracefully performed by Mrs. Moore, "Merlyn," Malone, who kindly consented at very short notice, Mrs. James Andrews, of Comber, through illness, being unable to fulfil the engagement. Miss E. L. Andrews, "Inla," Comber, occupied the chair, willingly complying with a request at a moment's notice. The Rev. J. H. Ewbank, in a few appropriate words introduced Mrs. Moore and Miss Andrews to the assembly, and Mr. Harold Thomas passed a vote of thanks, making a few interesting references regarding the object of our Sale. Our very best thanks are due to all friends, both town and country, for visiting us on this particular occasion, it was indeed encouraging to see so many desirous of helping us in our effort. We received some gifts

which were not accompanied by name or address, so we take this opportunity of thanking the very kind, but unknown donors. The Sale was organised by our Branch of the Women's League, who had valuable assistance from the Teachers and scholars, also very willing help came from the men of the congregation who worked hard on the eve of the Sale, erecting stalls, etc. The absence of Mrs. J. H. Ewbank through a bereavement in her family, was very much regretted by all. Irrespective of the unfavourable trade conditions having existed in our district for some time, we realised over £80, after deducting expenses, which is a marked improvement on last year's Sale. During the month of November members received a pleasant surprise in finding the old carpet in the Church Parlour replaced with a neat covering of linoleum. This was the work of those two most excellent members of the Church Committee. Messrs A. Doyle and J. M'Ilwrath who had raised the money by means of a Social evening. They have thus once again placed

us under a debt of gratitude. The many friends of Miss Margaret M'Vicker, who was over on a visit from Australia last year, will regret to hear that she underwent a second operation last August, but is now making headway towards normal health once more.

Mountpottinger Branch Unitarian League.

On December 3rd, we had a very interesting talk by Mrs. Hume, O.B.E., on "Economical Cooking." Our Lecturer very kindly brought with her samples of the good things which she had chosen to speak upon. The tasting was thoroughly enjoyed, which spoke well for Mrs. Hume's recipes. All expressed their appreciation for our Lecturer's kindness in taking so much trouble preparing samples which proved that the recipes were well worth putting into practice. Many useful questions were asked, and Mrs. Hume's answers were carefully noted. Our President, Mrs. Ewbank, expressed the thanks of the members to Mrs. Hume for being so kind as to come and lecture to us at a time when she was so busy.

Congregations of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Belfast.—First Church, Rosemary Street, 11-30 and 7, Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A.
 „ All Souls', Elmwood Avenue, 11-30 and 7, Rev. Sydney P. Whitehouse.
 „ Mountpottinger Unitarian Church, 11-30 and 7, Rev. J. H. Ewbank, B.A., B.D.
 „ York Street Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, 11-30 and 7, Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A.
Dublin.—Unitarian Church, Stephen's Green, 12 and 7, Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A.
Antrim.—Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 12 noon, Rev. George V. Crook.
Ballee.—11-45, Rev. Joseph H. Bibby.
Ballycarry.—Rev. William G. Marsden.
Ballyclare.—Rev. A. M. Bell, B.A.
Ballyhemlin.—Rev. John Barron.
Ballymoney.—The Remonstrant Meeting House, 12-15 p.m., Rev. Felix Holt, B.A.
Banbridge.—First Presbyterian Church, 12 noon and 6-30 p.m., Rev. Percival Godding.
Cairncastle.—Old Meeting House. 12-15 p.m., Rev. Eustace Thompson.
Clough.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Meeting House, 12 o'clock noon.—Supply.
Comber.—Rev. J. Glynne Davies.
Cork.—Rev. W. A. Weatherall.
Crumlin.—The Old Presbyterian Church, 12 noon, Rev. G. Price-Jones.

Downpatrick.—First Presbyterian Church, 11-30 a.m., Supply.
Dromore.—Rev. Alfred Davison.
Dunmurry.—Rev. John A. Kelly.
Glenarm.—Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 12 noon, Rev. J. A. Miskimmin, B.A.
Greyabbey.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, 12 noon (6 p.m. November to February), Rev. W. H. T. Tilson, M.A.
Holywood.—First Presbyterian Church, 11-30 a.m. and 7 p.m., Rev. Edgar Lockett.
Killinchy.—Rev. David J. Williams.
Larne.—Rev. James Kennedy, Rev. John Begg.
Moir.—Rev. Percival Godding.
Moneyrea.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church 12 o'clock noon.—Rev. J. Dare Davies.
Newry.—First Presbyterian Church, 12 noon and 7 p.m. (October to May), Rev. G. J. Slipper.
Newtownards.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, 3-30 p.m., Rev. W. H. T. Tilson, M.A.
Rademon.—Rev. John J. Magill, B.A.
Raloo.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, 12 noon, Rev. John M'Cleery.
Templepatrick.—Rev. Alfred Turner.
Warrenpoint.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church.—Services fortnightly, October to May, at 3-30 p.m.—Rev. G. J. Slipper.

Once again—for the fifth time—the Editor asks for full details from all Congregations.

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